

ONE-PIECE FIELD CORE SHELL

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates generally to a field core shell typically part of a field core assembly used on an electromagnetic clutch of the type found in automotive air conditioning systems to drive a compressor, and more particularly, to a one-piece field core shell and method of shaping the one-piece field core shell by spin-roll forming.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

A typical electromagnetic clutch contains an annular electromagnet coil that fits into a wire winding pod section in the field core shell of a field core assembly.

Field core shells have traditionally been manufactured using a two-piece construction. As shown in FIGS. 1A-C, a press formed top angled piece is attached to a press formed annular bottom piece that contains inner and outer rings used to hold the wire windings of the electromagnetic coil. As illustrated in Patent No. 5,273,385, incorporated by reference, an integral blind tubular rivet is used to hold the top angled piece to the bottom piece, forming the completed assembly. This assembly is illustrated in cross-section in FIG. 1C.

Forming a field core shell from a two-piece construction described above and as shown in FIG. 1C is a time consuming and costly process.

1 The cost of manufacturing two separate components that comprise the
2 shell and the cost of assembling those components, may be reduced by
3 forming a one-piece shell.

4 References in the automotive art that disclose spin-roll forming
5 products from a single piece of metal include U.S. Patents No. 4,388,817,
6 No. 4,532,786, and No. 4,936,129. Each of these patents discloses a
7 method of forming an automotive wheel from a single piece of metal
8 wherein, during the wheel-forming process, a peripheral portion of the
9 metal preform is split radially to form two annular split portions, which are
10 then formed into different portions of the wheel rim.

11 The present invention relates to manufacturing a one-piece field
12 core shell by using spin-roll forming methods. A one-piece field core shell
13 that may be used in a field core assembly such as those found on an
14 electromagnetic clutch of the type found in automotive air conditioning
15 systems.

16 SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

17 In accordance with one aspect, the present invention provides for a
18 field core shell made from a single piece of metal typically, a solid circular
19 disk, by a spin-roll forming process. The spin-roll forming process displaces
20 metal from a flat portion (e.g., a flat plate of metal sheet) in a radial and
21 axial direction to produce the one-piece field core shell.

1 In accordance with another aspect, the present invention provides
2 a spin-roll formed one-piece field core shell that is formed from a disc
3 having top and bottom external surfaces. The core shell has an outer
4 annular ring integral to and encircling a center axis of the disc and
5 extending from the bottom external surface in a direction that is
6 perpendicular to the bottom surface of the disc and parallel to the center
7 axis of the disc. The core shell has an inner annular ring integral to and
8 encircling a center axis of the disc, with the inner annular axis spaced
9 radially inward from the outer annular ring and extending from the bottom
10 external surface in a direction that is perpendicular to the bottom surface
11 of the disc and parallel to the center axis of the disc. The core shell also
12 has a mounting flange integral to the disc, with having a bore extending
13 from the mounting flange to the bottom external surface of the disc.

14 In accordance with yet another aspect, the present invention
15 provides a method of forming the one-piece field core shell. In the
16 method, a shaping roller is pressed against a side of a spinning annular
17 disc of sheet metal. The shaping roller is moved progressively radially
18 inwardly against the side of the rotating disc which displaces a portion of
19 metal in the form of an axially extending annular wave. The so displaced
20 metal is pressed by an axially moving shaping roller against different
21 mandrels to form a mounting flange and two annular rings opposite the
22 mounting flange to complete the integral one-piece component.

1 A feature of the invention is to provide a field core shell that is made
2 from a one-piece construction that is less costly and time consuming to
3 manufacture than the current construction.

4 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

5 FIG. 1A is a top perspective view of a prior art field core shell;

6 FIG. 1B is a bottom perspective view of the core shell of FIG. 1A, and
7 shows installed wire windings;

8 FIG. 1C is a cross section view taken along line 1C-1C in FIG. 1A;

9 FIG. 2A is a top perspective view of a first embodiment of a field
10 core shell of the present invention;

11 FIG. 2B is a bottom perspective view of the first embodiment of the
12 field core shell of the present invention;

13 FIG. 2C is a cross section view taken along line 2C-2C in FIG. 2A;

14 FIG. 3A is a top perspective view of a second embodiment of the
15 field core shell of the present invention;

16 FIG. 3B is a bottom perspective view of the second embodiment of
17 the field core shell of the present invention;

18 FIG. 3C is a cross section view taken along line 3C-3C in FIG. 3A;

19 FIG. 4A is a cross section view of a stamped wire winding pod that
20 may be used to make either a first or second embodiment of the field
21 core shell of the present invention;

1 FIG. 4B is a cross section view of the first embodiment of the field
2 core shell made using the stamped wire winding pod in FIG. 4A, with the
3 mounting flange being spin-roll formed;

4 FIG. 5 is a cross-section view of key elements of a spin-roll forming
5 machine and an annular disc positioned in the machine for spin-roll
6 forming;

7 FIG. 6 is a view similar to FIG. 5, but showing a machine at a
8 progressive operational step completing the mounting flange in the first
9 embodiment of the field core shell of the present invention;

10 FIG. 7 is a view similar to FIG. 5, but showing the machine at a
11 progressive operational step completing the inner annular ring of the first
12 embodiment of the field core shell of the present invention;

13 FIG. 8 is a view similar to FIG. 5 but showing the machine at a
14 progressive operational step the outer annular ring of the first embodiment
15 of the field core shell of the present invention;

16 FIG. 9 illustrates the completion of the bore and a hole for wire leads
17 for the first embodiment of the field core shell of the present invention;
18 and

19 FIGS. 10-13 are cross-section views that illustrate a second method
20 for making the first embodiment of the field core shell of the present
21 invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE EXAMPLE EMBODIMENTS

In order to better appreciate the present invention, the prior art is briefly discussed. Referring now to FIG. 1A-C, a prior art two-piece field core shell **10a** is shown having an outer annular ring **26a** and an inner annular ring **24a** that form a wire winding pod **20a**. Using multiple components, a separately formed mounting flange **30a** is attached to the wire winding pod **20a** by rivets **14a** using a number of manufacturing operations.

A first embodiment of a one-piece field core shell **10** shown in FIGS. 2A-C is produced from a blank disc of sheet metal. The first embodiment includes a spin-roll formed wire winding pod **22** having an outer annular ring **26**, an inner annular ring **24** and a top surface **25**. The top surface **25** having a hole **18** to feed wire leads. The mounting flange **30** is spin-roll formed completing the one-piece field core shell **10** of the first embodiment of the present invention.

A first method for forming the first embodiment of the present invention formed from a blank disc of sheet metal is shown in progressive steps in FIGS. 5-9 and will now be described.

Referring to FIG. 5, a spin-roll forming machine **40** is shown in an initial run position where the blank disc is starting to be shaped in a form that, when finished, includes the features of the first embodiment of the present invention.

Machine **40** is a versatile piece of equipment that can accommodate mandrels that may form a range of mounting flanges and wire winding pod diameters according to the methods of the present invention. Mandrels are selected and used having the required corresponding diameters needed to form the appropriate mounting flanges and wire winding pods as desired by the field core shell machine operator.

The machine **40** includes a headstock mandrel **42** and a mounting flange forming mandrel **44**. A solid circular disc **50** of sheet metal is positioned within a circular recess **56** on the headstock mandrel **42** and is securely clamped thereto by an end face **46** of mounting flange forming mandrel **44**. The mounting flange forming mandrel **44** is moved in an axial direction D and pressed firmly against the center of disc **50** to hold it in position during the forming process.

A shaping roller **48** is transferred to an initial forming position by moving it in the X direction so that a rounded edge **49** of the shaping roller is pressed against the disc **50**. The mandrel and head stock are rotated which spins the disc around an axis A. Shaping roller **48** is also free to rotate around axis B as the disc spins. The shaping roller **48** with its rounded edge **49** moves progressively in direction X from edge **54** (FIG. 5) against the upper face **52** of the disc and displaces metal along the upper face of the disc and thins the disc while forming mounting flange **30**

1 (FIG.6) to a desired height and diameter, for example, as is shown in FIG.
2 6.

3 The one-piece field core shell, with its mounting flange **30** formed, is
4 taken from the mandrel **42** and inverted 180 degrees and placed onto a
5 mounting flange mandrel **44** (FIG. 7). The mounting flange mandrel **44**
6 holds the partially formed one-piece field core for its next operation. As
7 shown in FIG. 7, the inner annular ring **24** is now spin-roll formed by shaping
8 roller **48**. Mounting flange **30** is pressed firmly into mounting flange
9 mandrel **44**, while the partially formed one-piece field core shell is securely
10 clamped by end face **63** of inner annular ring forming mandrel **62**.
11 Mounting flange **30** spins about axis A in spin-roll forming machine **40** while
12 the shaping roller **48** is again, as shown in FIG. 5, brought into contact with
13 an upper face **52** of disc **50** at a position proximate the edge **54** of disc **50**.
14 The shaping roller **48**, with its rounded edge **49**, moves progressively in
15 direction X against the side of the disc and displaces metal from the side
16 of the disc and thins the disc while forming the inner annular ring **24** to a
17 desired height and diameter, for example as shown in FIG. 7.

18 Once the inner annular ring **24** is formed, the one-piece field core
19 shell is ready for its final operations. (FIGS. 8 and 9). The one-piece field
20 core shell with its mounting flange **30** and inner annular ring **24** formed, is
21 taken from mandrel **44** and again inverted 180 degrees and placed onto
22 outer annular ring mandrel **61**(FIG. 8). Mandrel **44** and outer annular ring
23 mandrel **61** hold the part in spin-roll forming machine **40** while outer

1 annular ring forming tool **64** moves in the X direction contacting edge **58**
2 as shown in FIG. 7, moving edge **58** in the D direction forming outer
3 annular ring **26** to a desired height and diameter, for example as shown in
4 FIG. 8.

5 As shown in FIG. 9, the bore **16**, used to mount a shaft (not shown)
6 and access hole **18** for the lead wires of the wire windings are then formed
7 using tools **35, 36**. The tools may be devices such as a drill or punch or any
8 other tool that can pierce sheet metal. The above-described method of
9 forming the first embodiment from a blank disc of sheet metal thus
10 produces the less costly and easily manufactured spin-roll formed field
11 core shell of the present invention.

12 A second method of forming the first embodiment is shown in FIGS.
13 10-13. An annular disc **51** with a center hole **57** is placed in machine **40** as
14 shown in FIG. 10. A mounting flange **30** and bore is formed using tool **33**
15 by the application of force to a desired height and diameter, for example,
16 as shown in FIG. 11.

17 As shown in FIG. 12, the inner annular ring **24** is now spin-roll formed
18 by shaping roller **48**. Mounting flange **30** is pressed firmly into mounting
19 flange mandrel **44**, while the partially formed one-piece field core shell is
20 also securely clamped in inner annular ring forming mandrel **62**.
21 Mounting flange **30** spins about axis A in spin-roll forming machine **40** while
22 the shaping roller **48** is brought into contact with an upper face **52** of disc
23 **51** at a position proximate the edge **54** of disc **51**. The shaping roller **48**,

1 with its rounded edge **49**, moves progressively in direction X against the
2 side of the disc and displaces metal from the side of the disc and thins the
3 disc while forming the inner annular ring **24** to a desired height and
4 diameter, for example, as shown in FIG. 12.

5 Once the inner annular ring **24** is formed, the one-piece field core
6 shell is ready for its final operation (FIG. 13). The one-piece field core shell
7 with its mounting flange **30** and inner annular ring **24** formed, is taken from
8 mandrel **44** and inverted 180 degrees and placed onto outer annular ring
9 mandrel **61** (FIG. 13). Mandrel **44** and outer annular ring mandrel **61** hold
10 the part in spin-roll forming machine **40** while outer annular ring forming
11 tool **64** moves in the X direction contacting edge **58** (FIG. 12), moving
12 edge **58** in the D direction forming outer annular ring **26** to a desired
13 height and diameter, for example, as shown in FIG. 13. Similar to the
14 process step in FIG. 9, the access hole **18** for the leads for the wire winding
15 is then formed using tool **36**.

16 The first embodiment of the one-piece field core shell **10** of the
17 present invention as shown in FIGS. 2A-C, may also be produced by using
18 a pre-stamped wire winding pod **21** as shown in FIG. 4A. The stamped
19 wire winding pod **21** has outer annular ring **26** and inner annular ring **24**
20 already formed. Stamped wire winding pod **21** is made in a separate
21 operation and is used in place of the spin-roll formed wire winding pod **22**.
22 The stamped wire winding pod **21** as shown in FIG. 4B, is placed in machine
23 **40** and as explained below, the mounting flange **30** is spin-roll formed to a

1 desired height and diameter, for example, as shown in FIG. 4B. A bore **16**
2 and access hole **18** for the lead wires of wire windings are also added as
3 shown in FIGS. 2A and 2C.

4 The method for forming the first embodiment using the stamped
5 wire winding pod **21** of the present invention will now be described with
6 reference to FIG. 4B. The stamped wire winding pod **21** having a top
7 surface **28** is positioned in the spin-roll forming machinery **40** that includes
8 the mounting flange mandrel **44**, a stamped wire winding pod mandrel **41**
9 and a shaping roller **48**. The shaping roller **48** with its rounded edge **49**
10 displaces a portion of metal from the top surface **28** of the stamped wire
11 winding pod **21** which is supported in mandrel **41**.

12 The shaping roller **48** is transferred to an initial forming position by
13 moving it in direction X so that a rounded edge **49** of the shaping roller is
14 pressed against the disc. The shaping roller **48** with its rounded edge **49**
15 moves progressively in direction X against the top surface **28** of the disc
16 and displaces metal along the upper face of the disc and thins the disc
17 while forming mounting flange **30** to a desired height and diameter, for
18 example, as is shown in FIG. 4B. Similar to the process step in FIG. 9, the
19 bore **16** and access hole **18** for the leads for the wire windings are formed.

20 Referring now to FIGS. 3A-C, a second embodiment of the one-
21 piece field core shell **11**, has a mounting flange that extends parallel to
22 the top surface **34**. The second embodiment is also produced from a
23 blank sheet of sheet metal. The second embodiment includes a spin-roll

1 formed wire winding pod **22**, having an outer annular ring **26** and an inner
2 annular ring **24** and holes **18, 19** on the top surface **34** to feed wire leads.

3 A method for forming the second embodiment of the one-piece
4 field core, as discussed in the paragraph immediately above, follows in
5 the paragraph below. The equipment and methods used to form the
6 second embodiment are similar to the equipment and methods used to
7 form the first embodiment as previously described and illustrated by FIGS.
8 5-13. The description of the method used to form the second
9 embodiment below will not include any reference to any particular figures
10 cited above.

11 To form the second embodiment, the spin-roll forming machine **40**
12 first utilizes the inner annular ring forming mandrel **62**. A solid circular disc
13 **50** of sheet metal is positioned within a circular recess **56** on the headstock
14 mandrel **42** and is securely clamped thereto by an end face **46** of inner
15 annular ring forming mandrel **62**. The inner annular ring forming mandrel
16 **62** is moved in an axial direction D and pressed firmly against the center of
17 disc **50** to hold it in position during the forming process.

18 A shaping roller **48** is transferred to an initial forming position by
19 moving it in direction X so that a rounded edge **49** of the shaping roller is
20 pressed against the disc. The mandrel and head stock are rotated which
21 spins the disc around an axis A. Shaping roller **48** is also free to rotate as
22 the disc spins. The shaping roller **48** with its rounded edge **49** moves
23 progressively in direction X from edge **54** against the upper face **52** of the

1 disc and displaces metal along the upper face of the disc and thins the
2 disc while forming inner annular ring **24** to a desired height and diameter.

3 Once the inner annular ring **24** is formed, the second embodiment
4 of the one-piece field core shell is ready for the outer annular ring **26** to be
5 formed. The one-piece field core shell with its inner annular ring **24**
6 formed, is taken from mandrel **44** and inverted 180 degrees and placed
7 onto outer annular ring mandrel **61**. Mandrel **44** and outer annular ring
8 mandrel **61** hold the part in spin-roll forming machine **40** while outer
9 annular ring forming tool **64** moves in the X direction contacting edge **58**,
10 moving edge **58** in the D direction forming outer annular ring **26** to a
11 desired height and diameter.

12 Once the outer annular ring **26** is formed, the second embodiment
13 of the one-piece field core shell is ready for its final operation. The center
14 of the circular disk is removed, forming a mounting flange **32** as shown in
15 FIG. 3A. Also similar to the process step in FIG. 9, the access holes **18, 19**
16 for the leads for wire winding are formed.

17 The inner and outer annular rings of each embodiment of the field
18 core shell as described, may be tapered at an angle alpha (FIG. 2C) in
19 order to allowing the wire windings to enter the wire winding pod formed
20 by the field core shell's annular rings. The tapered angle alpha may be
21 from 0 to 3 degrees from an axis that is parallel to the center axis A of the
22 field core shell as shown in FIG. 2C.

1 In addition, the inner and outer annular rings of each embodiment
2 of the field core shell as described, extend in a direction that is
3 perpendicular to the bottom surface of the disc and parallel to the center
4 axis of the disc and may be the same distance or one ring may extend
5 farther than the other in length in order to completely capture the wire
6 windings once installed in the field core shell's wire winding pod.

7 It will be understood by one who is skilled in the art of field cores that
8 a range of mounting flanges and wire winding pod diameters can be
9 provided according to the methods of the present invention by selecting
10 mandrels having the required corresponding diameters to the appropriate
11 mounting flanges and wire winding pods desired.

12 It is also understood by one who is skilled in the art of spin-roll
13 forming that the order of steps taken to spin-roll form may be reduced or
14 altered from those described above to produce the equivalent one-piece
15 field core shell of the present invention. Also, many types of forming
16 methods equivalent to the spin-roll forming method may be used to
17 produce the desired one-piece field core shell of the present invention.
18 The present invention includes all such equivalent steps and forming
19 methods, and is limited only by the scope of the claims.

20 Although the invention has been shown and described with respect
21 to certain embodiments, it is obvious that equivalent alterations and
22 modifications will occur beyond those discussed to others skilled in the art
23 upon reading and understanding of the specification. The present

- 1 invention includes all such equivalent alterations and modifications, and is
- 2 limited only by the scope of the claims.

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